

possible. All of it is useful, readable, not too technical, and consists of 15 papers, together with introductions and discussions following. The chapters cover classification; perception and social responses; language, divided into experimental, comparative, and clinical approaches; followed by approaches to treatment in behavioural therapy; work with parents; and educational and speech therapy with the child.

A key article, with the title *Autism a central disorder of cognition and language?*, is that by the editor Michael Rutter and his colleagues Lawrence Bartak and Steven Newman; it gives as clear a description as is currently possible of the diagnosis in terms of 'what autism is not' and 'what autism might be'. It discusses possible factors, for example genetic, and rules out others seen as no longer central to this diagnosis; it supplies valuable new material in regard to outcome and provides factual evidence concerning such components as intellectual retardation and brain damage whether inborn or progressive. It leaves the emphasis on the essential factor of 'the presence of a severe and extensive defect in language comprehension and in central functions associated . . . with the processing of symbolic or sequenced information'. Following this is a more detailed study of perceptual and language development in autistic children by Lorna Wing.

The succeeding sections on therapy include an interesting account of the help that parents can give when they are carefully involved through professional help in working with their own children. Other papers include modifications of behaviour therapy, speech and language therapy, and more direct educational work in school units devised for autistic children. The book is without question of great value to paediatricians, since they are often the first to be consulted when a child begins so early in life to show an unusual developmental deviation. One of the most valuable derives from Kolvin working at a unit in a children's hospital; and it is a paediatrician, Rendle-Short, who ends his contribution by pointing out that the paediatrician and the general practitioner play a vital role in making the early diagnosis.

**Comprehensive Management of Epilepsy in Infancy, Childhood and Adolescence.** By SAMUEL LIVINGSTON. (Pp. xiii + 657; 41 figures + 32 tables. U.S. \$27.50.) Springfield, Illinois: C. C. Thomas. 1972.

This book is exactly what its title claims—a comprehensive guide to all aspects of the management of epilepsy in childhood. The author has been director of the Johns Hopkins Hospital Epilepsy Clinic for 26 years, and he writes from immense personal experience, as well as from an encyclopaedic knowledge of the literature. The book is admirably written, always clear, and every statement is thoroughly well documented. Though the subject is primarily management, there is a long chapter on the classification of epilepsy used by the author, so the reader is left in no doubt as to precisely what the author means by a particular term. Another early chapter deals with 'Disorders simulating epilepsy',

i.e. febrile convulsions and breath holding. There are over 200 pages on anticonvulsants—their pharmacologies, uses, and side effects—again with copious references. The ketogenic diet receives a full and detailed chapter: though difficult to administer, Dr. Livingston has found it effective in many cases that have been refractory to drug treatment.

Psychiatric aspects, education, employment, legal aspects, and driving are all dealt with, though these chapters are not as fully applicable on this side of the Atlantic as the earlier chapters.

This is a superb book, of which I read every word with enjoyment and admiration. Convulsive disorders seem to confuse many paediatricians. Dr. Livingston's book could do much to make things clearer, as well as being an invaluable reference work. I can think of few questions I have been asked by parents, students, or colleagues that are not dealt with.

Since it is surely destined to become a classic, some minor improvements could be suggested for the second edition. It is somewhat confusing to have two chapters, one by the author and one by Dr. Deitrich Blumer, on psychiatric aspects of epilepsy, particularly as each presents opposite views of the incidence of psychiatric disturbance in temporal lobe epilepsy. Dr. Blumer gives the conventional view that such disturbances are very common; Dr. Livingston has found them no commoner in psychomotor than in other forms of epilepsy.

The book seems in general to run out of steam in its last third. The last chapter but one, on 'Prognosis for the child with epilepsy today' seems remarkably feeble compared with earlier chapters: indeed it contains much less information on prognosis than several of the earlier chapters. It is as though the author had become weary of the massive compilation of facts which he uses so effectively earlier on.

This book is strongly recommended for every paediatric department's library.

**The Handicapped Child, Research Review Volume II. Studies in Child Development.** By ROSEMARY DINNAGE. (Pp. xi + 451. £5.50.) London: Longman. 1972.

This book follows the same pattern as Mrs. Dinnage's highly successful Research Review Volume I which dealt with cerebral palsy, 'minimal cerebral dysfunction', and epilepsy. The present volume covers disorders of vision, hearing, and speech, with briefer sections on some other chronic physical handicaps. The first section is a superbly lucid 'Review of Research'. Next are abstracts of 81 completed and published research projects in this field, averaging nearly 3 pages each, and therefore long enough to be really informative. An annotated bibliography of 627 further publications follows; here the comments are much shorter, but pithy enough to tell the reader whether this book or paper should be pursued further. Finally there is an annotated list of 44 ongoing research projects, 32 British and 12 American. (One of the very few criticisms one can